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## RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

### EXTRACTS FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE FIRST PROTESTANT MISSIONARIES TO INDIA.

(*Continued from p.* 596.)

IN the last number you inserted several passages, taken from the preface to the first accounts which were published under the sanction of the Bartlett's Buildings' Society, of the protestant missions in India. I shall now proceed to lay before your readers some extracts from the accounts themselves.

The first letter contained in this volume is from James Finck, who was sent out as a printer from England to India. It is dated from Rio Janeiro, October 20, 1711.

"Hitherto," says this pious missionary, "the Lord hath helped us, and delivered us out of many visible dangers, when human wit and reason seemed to be put to a nonplus. Under these circumstances, a man hath a daily opportunity for improving himself in prayer, patience, resignation, and particularly in a hearty reliance upon the power and goodness of God, whose help then generally begins, when human support is at a stand. As for those trials in particular, that happened within the ship itself, I must previously acquaint you, that our vessel was unfortunately crowded with abundance of profane and disorderly people. The character of the generality of my fellow-travellers is drawn up at large, Psal. lxxiii.; which Psalm, as it hath often afforded me matter of meditation, so it hath left the deeper impression on my mind, after I have seen the dreadful disaster which befel those men who did but a little before boast of their sins, and did not hide them. As for Governor Collett, I must needs say, that from the very first hour of my being admitted into his acquaintance, he hath expressed to me much kindness, and a readiness to favour the design in which I am engaged.

"Two days after our arrival here, he invited me to accompany him into the town, which I readily did, but desired him withal, that I might not go as a bare passenger, but as one of his domestics or officers. This he complied with: and I found afterwards, that such a caution was very necessary, in a place over-run with gross idolatry and superstition. Besides this, you must know that the Inquisition is (as in the other Portuguese territories,) so very flagrant in Brazil, that one can't take sufficient precaution amongst a people so much enslaved by the authority of Rome. At our arrival here, near a hundred persons were just embarking for Portugal, in order to be tried there at the Holy Office.* They were suspected of favouring Judaism.

"The negro slaves, making up in number near eight thousand souls, are in a pitiful condition. All the evidence they have of their reception into the Christian Church, amounts to no more than the knowledge they have of their being sprinkled with water, together with the Pater-Noster, which they are taught to rehearse. Besides this, they have

* To the honour of our government, it is stipulated, in the last treaty, that the Inquisition shall have no farther power in the Brazils.

an hour in religious exercises. They use to pray one after another, as they are able to express it from their own experience. The men and boys meet together in one room, and the women and girls in another. And we observe, that the youth of both sexes do always exceed their elders, both in the knowledge of the truth of Christ, and also in the exercise of prayer to God."

The books which they employed in instructing their flock, were Freylinghausen's Grounds and Principles of Theology, Luther's Catechism, and Dr. Spence's Exposition of that Catechism.

They thus conclude this first letter to the Society:

"May the infinitely great and good God, who has given his Son to be a light to the Gentiles, and a Saviour unto the ends of the earth, establish this work more and more! May he strengthen it against the force and wiles of the enemy, that the glory of his own everlasting name, and the eternal salvation of the Heathen, may be thereby happily promoted! The name of the Lord be praised from the rising of the Sun to the going down of the same." (*To be continued.*)

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*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

Much has been advanced in your valuable publication, concerning the period of 1260 years; and the advocates of the different solutions proposed, respecting its commencement and termination, have very ably and closely investigated the subject. But there exists an era to which my mind has been long directed—from the very moment, I might almost say, that divine truth engaged its attention—to which not even the most distant allusion, as I have seen, has yet been made; but which affords the most promising and satisfactory result, if more particularly and deliberately considered.

It appears to me as forming a conspicuous mark of the over-ruling providence of God, that there should be used, through a great portion of the globe, and in the very country to which the prophecies of holy Scripture principally refer—in a period, too, when general expectation is formed of the approaching close of the 1260 years—an era of years which has arrived at such a very particular date, that it seems more than any other to arrest and fix the attention: I mean, the computation of time adopted by the Mahommedans, the years of the Hegira, or flight of Mahommed from Mecca, now in its 1227th year. I cannot but think, from the existence of such an era, at such an eventful time, and so nearly approaching to the period of years so frequently pointed out in Scripture, that we are directed (as if the Lord himself had spoken), to regard the "Hegira" as plainly indicating the moment when arrived at its 1260th year, as the precise point fixed in his eternal decrees for the full accomplishment of prophecy.

The more closely this period is examined in its bearings with respect to other parts of prophecy, I think stronger evidence will be obtained of its being the appointed period. It will be found, on calculation, that the 1260th year of the Hegira (the Mahommedan year being only 354 days) commencing July 15 or 16, A.D. 622, will expire in August 1843. It appeared an important species of proof, in favour of Mr. Faber's interpretation of this subject, that the two periods of 2200 years, as he has stated in preference to the common reading, and the 1260 years, according to his calculation, and from his data, should expire at the very same period of time; and I must own it made a deep impression on my mind, and loosened my confidence in my favourite Mahommedan era, not having then arrived at the same conclusions which I now entertain; though it did not appear decisive that a proper event had been chosen from which to date his 2200

years; and his scheme proceeded also on a deviation from the authorised text of Scripture. Adopting, however, the same method of calculating back from the supposed expiration of the Mahommedan era in its 1260th year, in the year 1843, we arrive at one of the most memorable periods in Scripture history, without altering the generally received text; a period which demands our most serious attention, and, I conceive, with reference to this subject, our assent, as being the one from which "the Numberer of secrets," as it is expressed in the margin of our Bibles, would have us date his 2300 years; the very year from which the seventy weeks of Daniel are calculated; the year 457 B. C., one of the most remarkable and distinguished points of time in the whole Scripture chronology; and a year which the learned Dean Prideaux has incontrovertibly established as that in which Ezra received his commission from Artaxerxes to restore and build Jerusalem. Thus seventy weeks of years, or 490 years, reach to the close of the life of our blessed Redeemer, in his 33d year; and 1810 years, the remaining portion of the period of 2300 years, bring us to the year 1843, the precise period pointed out by the accomplishment of 1260 years of the Mahommedan era.

I look then, with ardent expectation and holy hope, from these premises, to the expiration of the period in question in the year 1843, when, the 2300 years having been accomplished, "the sanctuary shall be cleansed;" when, the 1260 years, according to the Mahommedan's own calculation, thus fixing the limits of his own existence, being expired, this Eastern limb of Antichrist, who has for so many ages kept possession of the Holy Land, and polluted the sanctuary, in every possible meaning of the word, shall be subdued and destroyed; and God's ancient people converted to the "faith as it is in Jesus," and restored to their own land; for the promise still stands sure, "that if they shall return to the Lord their God, and obey his voice, according to all that was commanded them, that He will turn their captivity, and have compassion on them;" and, that "though any of them were driven out to the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord their God gather them, and bring them into the land which their fathers possessed."

I have one more observation to offer, and I shall conclude. The preceding remarks will derive further confirmation, if it could be made appear, on probable grounds, that the same period of 1260 years, as it respects the Papal power, or Western Antichrist, expired in the same year of 1843; and I cannot but think there is also in this circumstance a great degree of probability.

Your very able correspondents, according to their different hypotheses, have derived the commencement of the 1260 years from the decree of Justinian, or the grant of Phocas; but might it not, with more or equal propriety, be derived from the Epistles of Pelagius, the predecessor of Gregory, to the Bishops of Istria, in the close of the year 583, or beginning of 584; when, according to Bowyer, in his History of the Popes, that very distinguishing doctrine of the papal power, the INFALLIBINITY OF THE POPE, was first openly maintained, by which, in a more especial manner than any other, "He, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God?" If this be admitted as the data from which the 1260 years of the western Antichrist are to be calculated, we are carried to precisely the same year, 1843, as in the former calculations, taking the years according to the era in use in the country to which the prophecy refers.

We have, then, the singular coincidence of three several periods ending at the same precise point of time which the Scriptures lead us to expect, and I trust we shall then have the satisfaction of seeing the

Mahommedan and papal tyranny subverted, and their abominable errors and superstitions overwhelmed in one common destruction, and "the kingdom of God established on the top of the mountains, and all nations flowing unto it."

I am not competent to investigate the subject with either learning or criticism; but I trust these plain hints will be received with candour, which are offered upon the principle that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;" and that the subject will be more ably discussed by your highly respected and valuable correspondents.

I am, &c.

J. A. B.

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*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

THE writer of the enclosed essay, "On Confidence in the Love of God," lays no claim to originality; for the subject will hardly admit of it; but he considers that this defect will be no bar to its admission, as he does not remember to have seen it discussed in the Observer since its establishment.

He has also to apologize for the incorporation of so many Scripture phrases, and some, perhaps, unacknowledged by inverted commas; but they were so beautifully and expressively adapted to his purpose, that he could not willingly decline them. The essay is now submitted to your examination, and, if approved of, the writer will be happy to meet it again in such good company as it will not fail to find in your much-loved publication.

I am, Sir,

Your constant admirer,

C. E. B.

### ON CONFIDENCE IN THE LOVE OF GOD.

When man arrives at the possession of his reasoning faculties, he finds himself a miracle of mechanism, situated in a world of wonders; and he perceives that his existence in it, his pleasures and comforts, arise from a variety of objects and circumstances, which, in their turn, are dependent upon the will of a supreme and almighty Providence. Without relatives he could not possess those refined sensations which exalt, at the same time that they delight, his heart. They are elegantly described by Mr. Scott, as

> "Those feelings which, to mortals giv'n,
> Have less of earth in them, than heav'n."

Without the aid of commerce, manufactures, and civilization, he could not be provided with those inferior auxiliaries to his welfare, which supply him with food, covering, and information. His life would be spent in solitary wretchedness, and consist of an alternation of sensuality and apathy.

But, in the present situation of the world, man is born into it, and finds society prepared to receive him; he is born to the enjoyment of advantages and luxuries, of which his ancestors had even no conception. If his mind be enlightened by divine grace, and he become "a follower of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises," he learns that "every good and perfect gift cometh from the Father of Lights, with whom is neither variableness nor the shadow of a change." His title to all these important mercies is founded alone on the love of God towards him; and he receives them all, temporal as well as spiritual, in token of that love, and in proof of his relationship to the glorious Head of the Church, the "great first-born among many brethren."

The knowledge of the real follower of the Lord Jesus is ample and important. To view the world in its true light; to be sensible that in it there is no abiding home for him; and to know that "there remaineth a rest for the people of God:" these are all valuable portions of heavenly wisdom: and when the Christian is enabled to fight the great fight of faith; to place